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Sugar in Wartime

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A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and John Baker, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, January 29, 1942, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

JOHN BAKER

And now on the home front. Here's Ruth Van Deman with more news from the home economists of the Department of Agriculture --- news about food in wartime. Ruth, does that by any chance mean you're going to say something about sugar?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

You don't think I'd skip the top-liner in the food news, do you?

JOHN BAKER

Well, sugar's pretty "hot" news right now.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Yes, everybody's talking about sugar, since the announcement came that sugar's to be rationed soon.

JOHN BAKER

As a matter of fact -- the stores in my neighborhood have been rationing sugar for quite a while --- and it makes me very unhappy as a three-meal a day dipper into the sugar bowl.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

As a figure-outer, John, you generally rate pretty high. You ought to be able to figure a way out of your sugar difficulties.

JOHN BAKER

But you don't know how much sugar I need to keep me happy?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Have you figured that out, too?

JOHN BAKER

I have --- down to the last teaspoon.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Let's have it --- the whole sweet truth.

JOHN BAKER

Did you say sweet truth, or sweet tooth?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Either one. It amounts to the same thing --- estimated sugar need of John for one week --- as a safeguard to a sweet disposition. On with the figures.

JOHN BAKER

Counting in the coffee and the breakfast cereal and a few other things, I figure I need 50 teaspoons of sugar a week to keep me well and happy.

(over)

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Now just a minute, let's deal with the happy first, and the well later --- that's something else again.

JOHN BAKER

Don't you dare tell me I can get the same amount of energy from sauerkraut or sapodillas.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

We'll come to that. Let's concentrate on the 50 teaspoons. How much do you think 50 teaspoons of sugar weigh?

JOHN BAKER

I don't know --- two pounds maybe.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Guess again. A teaspoonful of sugar, that is, level teaspoon, weighs about a seventh of an ounce.

JOHN BAKER

One ounce --- seven teaspoons.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

So the scales say. 8 ounces of sugar --- about half a pound --- would give you your 50 teaspoons for the week.

JOHN BAKER

But that's under the three-quarters of a pound the Office of Price Administration has suggested for a weekly ration.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Certainly it is --- 4 ounces under ---

JOHN BAKER

Then some of my allowance could go into the sugar bin in the kitchen to cook with.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Surely --- a pie or a cake now and then --- to make you even happier.

JOHN BAKER

We don't have many sweet desserts at our house.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Good. You won't have to revamp the meals on the victory pattern then. And you've answered the question about where you get your calories.

JOHN BAKER

Did I say anything about calories?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

You said energy --- calories are a measure of energy ---- fuel value in food.

JOHN BAKER

O.K. And the energy needs of the body are counted in calories too.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Right. And you can supply those energy needs of the body from many kinds of food. For instance, cereals in all their forms, bread, breakfast food, fried mush, flapjacks—are cheap sources of energy and some other food values besides, if you take the cereals in their whole-grain form. Refined white sugar is pure carbohydrate --- calories and nothing else.

JOHN BAKER

Nothing else? What about the pleasant taste? What would flapjacks be without something sweet on them.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

There goes the sweet tooth speaking again.

JOHN BAKER

Surely the sweet tooth has a right to be heard. I insist, there's psychology as well as physiology in food.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

I agree 100 per cent on that --- as long as you make sure your body gets what it needs for good nutrition. I believe, like you, that food to furnish good nutrition needs to be food that's good fun to eat. But your sweet tooth can lead you very far astray. Sweet foods have a way of satisfying the appetite quickly. They can cover up "hidden hunger" ---make you forget for the time being you aren't getting enough minerals and vitamins, and real body building substances. That's why youngsters now-a-days eat their cereal without sugar, and have their sweet food at the end of the meal after they've had the musts on the list.

JOHN BAKER

I gather from all this, Ruth, that from the nutrition standpoint you think this sugar rationing may do us more good than harm.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

I'm sure of it. The sweet tooth may grumble a little, but even in the end that tooth may be healthier for it. There's a lot of evidence that eating a great deal of sweet creates a condition favorable to tooth decay.

Maybe you noticed a moment ago I didn't rise to that question, "What would flapjacks be without something sweet on them?"

JOHN BAKER

Yes, I noticed.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

I was just biding my time before we got into the substitutes for sugar --- refined white sugar. As a matter of fact, you'd take a lot of the joy out of eating if you had to take all your sugar as refined can or beet sugar, the kind that is going to be rationed.

JOHN BAKER

There's something in that --- Lead on --- pass me the maple sirup, the honey, the sorghum.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

The corn sirup, the cane sirup. But if you were a cakemaker now, you might have your troubles trying to change over a recipe that calls for granulated sugar to take one of these liquid forms of sweet. You couldn't do it on a cup for cup basis. But it can be done. The women of the United States of America did it during World War No. 1. And we know more about food now than we did then.

JOHN BAKER

Has the Bureau of Home Economics any recipes to offer on sugar substitutes?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Yes, we have some on how to use honey --- in cookies and cakes, and lots of dishes.

JOHN BAKER

Can you make an all-honey cake?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Yes, if the recipe is built for it. We have some for all-honey cakes, and some for half-sugar, half-honey.

JOHN BAKER

If I may, I'd like to offer that honey bulletin to our Farm and Home listeners a little later.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

By all means --- There's one more item in the sugar situation I'd like to say something about first. Many women have asked me about sugar for home canning.

JOHN BAKER

Naturally. That cuts straight into the question of food conservation.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

I haven't any information except what OPA has given to the general public. But I understand that supplies for canning next summer are being definitely figured on now. That's one reason we need to slow up on our use of sugar at present.

JOHN BAKER

Use a little less now --- so we'll have more when we need it.

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Yes, but if sugar supplies should be very short next summer, we could still can fruit so it would keep, without any sugar at all. It can be sweetened when the jars are opened and the fruit is served.

JOHN BAKER

And Does the Bureau of home Economics have directions for canning fruit without sugar?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

In the canning bulletin, yes, - - - directions for canning with or without sugar and for sirups of five degrees of sweetness --- all the way from light to very heavy.

JOHN BAKER

May I offer the home canning bulletin as well as the honey bulletin to our Farm and Home friends?

RUTH VAN DEMAN

Certainly. They're free to all-comers as long as the supply holds out.

JOHN BAKER

(Repeat offer - "Honey and some of its uses"

"Home canning of fruits, vegetables, and meats.")

Write to Bureau of Home Economics. USDA. Washington.

